

Block**2****LISTENING AND SPEAKING IN INFORMAL AND
FORMAL CONTEXTS**

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BLOCK INTRODUCTION

In Block 2 *Listening and Speaking in Informal and Formal Contexts* we go from the theoretical (Block 1- Understanding Communication) to the practical. We discuss both the informal and formal aspects of communication.

Unit 1 deals with *Informal Interpersonal Functions* such as greetings, introductions, inviting, small talk and so on.

Unit 2 *Making Enquiries/Asking Questions* has a mix of both formal and informal encounters.

Unit 3 *Group Discussions and Meetings* teaches you skills which might help you get a job and assist you in conducting yourself at the work place.

Again in Unit 4 *Essentials of Presentation Skills* we teach you a skill which will help you in your academic and work life.

Please read the Units carefully and attempt the Check Your Progresses activities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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UNIT 1 INFORMAL INTERPERSONAL FUNCTIONS

Structure

- 1.0 Objectives
 - 1.1 Introduction
 - 1.2 Greetings
 - 1.3 Introducing Oneself and Others
 - 1.4 Extending Invitations: Accepting, Declining Invitations, Taking Leave
 - 1.5 Small Talk
 - 1.5.1 Talking about the Weather
 - 1.5.2 Personal Matters
 - 1.5.3 Food
 - 1.5.4 Entertainment
 - 1.6 Let Us Sum Up
 - 1.7 Answers
-

1.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through the unit, you should find it easy to:

- Start casual conversations
- Introduce yourself and others,
- Bring a conversation to an end,
- Take leave of others, and
- Pronounce the sounds represented by the letters ‘a’, and ‘o’ especially the weak forms.



1.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous block you learnt about some basic concepts for communication in English. In this unit, you will get acquainted with some of the ways in which you can express yourself informally with friends, classmates or colleagues in English. You may have to do this, if the people around you speak a language different from your own. There are times when you may be in a group where the common language for communication is English.

The tips in this Unit will help you get prepared to communicate well in such situations. We cannot really predict what you will need to talk about, but we can help you with some commonly used phrases and expressions.

In the past, conversation was considered an art. A good conversationalist was the light of social gatherings. Talking about the affairs of the everyday world in an interesting and entertaining manner was a cultivated talent. Communication is not always an exchange of information. Sharing ideas on everyday events can be a great source of pleasure and satisfaction.

Though conversation is not viewed as much of an art today as it was in the days of yore, the ‘gift of the gab’ is still thought desirable for maintaining cordial relations with people around us. Even in formal situations like meetings, the participants do not abruptly begin to talk about business. They first warm up with a few comments about the weather, the journey, food, sports, or current events, before broaching the subject matter.

We also provide you with samples of conversation from fiction, as one form of exposure to the conventions of everyday speech. You can in addition observe others speaking and notice some of the ways in which things are said. A colleague remembers how as a small child she waited with great curiosity to see what a group of visitors to her home would say as they took leave.

As you work through the suggestions in this block, you can similarly note the equivalences and differences between the kind of expressions you use in your other languages, and English. You can also watch movies or television serials and chat shows in English. Remember, what you say should be appropriate to the situation you are in and the kind of relationship you share with the people you speak to.

1.2 GREETINGS

Let us first look at a sample taken from a novel of a conversation between two old friends meeting after a long interval of time:

‘Hello, Raj!’

“Welcome Prashant...take a seat”

“You startled me, Raj. When did you grow such long hair? You look like one of those ancient sages living out in the jungles”,...

“Whether I look like a sage or not is debatable. That New Delhi is a jungle, is not!... Come tell us about good old Mumbai, which I miss so much. But first, tea or coffee?”

[The Return of Vaman]

‘Hello!’ is a common form of greeting among friends.

- There can be variations in the tone in which it is said, depending upon the emotional state of the speaker and the degree of intimacy between the people engaged in the conversation. In this case we can see that the two friends are overjoyed at meeting each other. The comment on physical appearance reflects the degree of intimacy between the two. There is also a reference to Raj’s feelings of nostalgia about the days he spent in Mumbai.



The next move in the conversation is the offering of a drink. Notice that this is not a full sentence. “But first, tea or coffee?” Expanded it means “Will you have tea or coffee?”

- Informal speech usually has half-sentences and phrases but because the speaker and the listener are face-to-face, much of the conversation is understood through facial expression and gestures.

Here is an exchange of greetings between a librarian and a library member:

“How are you this morning, sir?”

“All right, thank you. And how are you?”

“Fine. Here are some new arrivals. You’d really be interested in this new book by Parnuk.”

“Thank you very much. I read his Nobel Prize speech and I am really eager to read all his works.”

- Notice the respectful tone of the librarian and the politeness of the member’s response to it without being overfriendly. “How are you?” is responded to with “All right, thank you”. Or more commonly, “Fine, thank you”, This could be followed by “And how are you?”

Let us now look at a slightly more formal exchange of greetings between two neighbours:

“How do you do, Mr. Mehta?”

“How do you do Mr. Trivedi? I’m sorry I didn’t notice you.”

“Well, I haven’t seen you for quite some time - well almost a week now.”

“I was out of town.”

“Is everything all right with you, Mr. Mehta?”

[*A River With Three Banks*]

- “How do you do?” is a common greeting, especially among the British. “How do you do?” is not a question. It is a greeting. The response to “How do you do?” is “How do you do?” This example shows the kind of exchange that could take place between two neighbours used to seeing each other regularly. It also reflects concern felt by one for the other.

Now look at this example:

“Hi!”

“Hello.”

“Why, what’s the matter?”

“Nothing”

“Come on; get it off your chest.”

“Thanks, it’s nothing really.”

- Notice how the effusive greeting “Hi!” by the first speaker is responded to with a stiff “Hello” by the second. Notice that the exchange is not open.

- The second speaker obviously is not in a mood to talk freely.
- “Hello” is less informal than “Hi!” We use “Hi” with very close friends, not generally with older people or people who are superiors at work.
 - The word “Hello” is also the most frequent greeting with which one receives a telephone call.
 - “Hello”, “Hullo”, “Hallo” are variations of the same word.

Other ways of greeting are:

“Good Morning” “Morning!” In the second instance the word ‘good’ is not uttered aloud but is understood.

“Good Evening”

“Nice to see you!”

“Hello, seeing you after a long time.”

“Nice to see you after so long”

“Hi, it seems ages since we met! How are you?”

“Delighted to see you!”

Activity 1

Write down five other greetings you hear being used by people around you or on television or any English movie.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

1.3 INTRODUCING ONESELF AND OTHERS

How do we introduce ourselves to people whom we have never met before?

“I’m Vinita Shukla. How do you do?”

“Hello. I am Naresh Tripathi from Convensys. Nice to meet you”.

“Have we met before?” I’m Renu Vyas.”

“Tarun George. I have a vague feeling we have met somewhere”.

“Was it at Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore?”

“That’s right. I did my Master’s there 2014-2016”.

“That’s it then. I was doing my research there, same time”

“I’m Sudhir Shah. Come for the interview?”

“Yes. My name’s Dina Vakil. You’re from?”

“Surat. And you?

“Vadodra. Are we too early?”

“It’s better this way than late”.

“I agree”.

These are some of the ways in which we introduce ourselves to others. Notice we do not refer to ourselves as Mr or Ms or Dr.

Do not say. “I’m Mr Sudhir Shah.”

While speaking we use contracted forms:

“I’m” “I am”

“My name is” “My name’s”.



Check Your Progress 1

List 5 contracted forms of verbs and give their expanded forms:

.....
.....
.....

1.4 EXTENDING INVITATIONS: ACCEPTING, DECLINING INVITATIONS, TAKING LEAVE

Now read this conversation and notice the way these two friends talk to each other. Notice the welcome, the introductions, the way an invitation is extended, accepted and declined.

Is Mr. Dhawan there, please?” “Please do come in.” “I’m sorry to barge in like this.”	It is generally considered impolite to barge into someone’s house without intimation. In the first section the visitor excuses himself for his unannounced visit and is welcomed by the hostess.
“Hello, Bob! What a surprise!” ... “This is my afternoon round of rum.” “How about joining me?”	Compare the formality of Bob with the informal tone of his friend Berry. In the second section he is greeted effusively by his friend asking him to join him in drinks.
“Too early for me.” “Look, you don’t have a phone and I didn’t note your address the last time I was here.”	Bob refuses politely, apologizes for dropping in unannounced.
“Ah, the explanations and apologies.’ ... “Back to your Englishness - appointments, phone calls. You’re welcome here any time, Bob” “Still...”	
“And that’s my bride. Married seven years now.” “Pleased to meet you Mrs. Dhawan.	Berry introduces his wife to him. Notice the expression “Pleased to meet you.” This is the response when somebody is introduced

	<p>to you. Other expressions are: “Glad to meet you”. “Pleasure meeting you”. These are not full sentences but phrases. “I am pleased/glad to meet you”, “it is a pleasure meeting you” would be the implied sentences.</p> <p>This is another example of how we leave out some very common words, easily understood from the context, when we speak.</p>
<p>“Well, I’m in a hurry. I just came to ask you, Mrs Dhawan and Gautam...”</p> <p>“Sonali is the name.”</p> <p>... All right... I should be delighted if both of you and Gautam could come to my party next Saturday...</p> <p>I am not so sure about Sonali. You see, she may have to visit her ailing aunt that evening. And Gautam’s away at Allahabad. But I’ll come.”</p> <p>“I’m sorry, my aunt has not been keeping too well, lately.”</p> <p>“What a pity!... I hope she gets well soon.”</p>	<p>The visitor signals that he wishes to leave with the words, “Well, I’m in a hurry.”</p> <p>He begins stating the purpose of his visit when Bob interrupts him commanding him to drop the formality with his wife and address her by her first name.</p> <p>Next, Bob invites Berry and his wife for the party. “I should be delighted...” Other expressions could be: “It would be lovely if...” “It would be great if...”</p> <p>This is the way in which one could excuse oneself or someone else from accepting an invitation.</p> <p>Apologizing for non-acceptance.</p> <p>Polite response. [A River with Three Banks)</p>

Here are some ways of leave-taking. Notice the polite responses by the hosts.

“*He hasn’t come yet*”. “*I think I should leave*.”

“Do sit for a little while more. You have waited for so long. He should be back any minute. Can I get you something to drink?”

“No thanks....”

“Did he know you were coming?”

“No, I thought I would take a chance. **I’ll go now.**

“Oh, I’ll tell him you came. Would you like to write down a message?”

“No, I’ll call later. Thanks.” “I must leave now.”

“It’s getting late. You have a long way to go.”

“Yes. Hope you get well soon.”

“Thanks. Thanks for coming to see me.”

Check Your Progress 2

Informal Interpersonal Functions

Grade the following expressions according to their level of formality/informality.
Use ranks 1-6: 1 for least formal and 6 for very formal.

- a) "Well, I think I should leave now."
- b) "That was a pleasant evening, indeed. Thanks. Good night"
- c) "It was nice spending time with you. See you soon."
- d) "Well, thanks for the great time. Look forward to spending more such occasions."
- e) "Bye then. Hope to see you soon."
- f) "May I take leave of you now?"
- g) "See you."

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Read these extracts from the novel *Not a Penny More Not a Penny Less* by Jeffrey Archer. Say which situation each extract describes i.e.

"leave-taking or parting, greeting, or greeting and extending an invitation.
Can you guess what the social relationship is between the speakers?

- i) 'See you in the morning, Professor. Thanks for a great evening.'

"My pleasure. I'll pick you up at 10 a.m. Sleep well — you have a full day ahead of you tomorrow.'

- ii) 'Good morning, David.'

"Good morning, Bernie. I thought I ought to let you know I spent the evening with a friend at Oxford, and he may invest some money in the company.

"That's fine, David, keep up the good work.'

- iii) 'Good morning, Mr. Silverman.'

Bernie, please call me Bernie. Take a seat.'

- iv) (on the telephone) 'Hi, Lloyd. Didn't know you were in Monte ...why don't we get together? ...8 p.m.? Great, I'll see you then.'

- v) 'Well, that seems to be all. Thank you for your cooperation. We may be in touch again some time in the future. We'll keep you informed of developments, and I hope you'll do the same for us.'

'Of course, Inspector. I do hope you have a safe journey back to town.'

- 2) *Comment on the situations described in these extracts from Jamila Gavin, The Wheel of Surya. Say who the speakers are and what they do (apologize, introduce themselves or others, etc.)*

- i) "I'm so sorry to intrude like this", said Tom awkwardly. "Let me introduce myself. My name is Tom Fletcher. I'm a teacher in India, but over on leave (in England) to see my parents ..."

ii) ‘Are you Jaspal Singh?’ she demanded.

Jaspal nodded.

‘Come with me then’, and ... she marched him over to one of the line-ups in front of the class teachers.

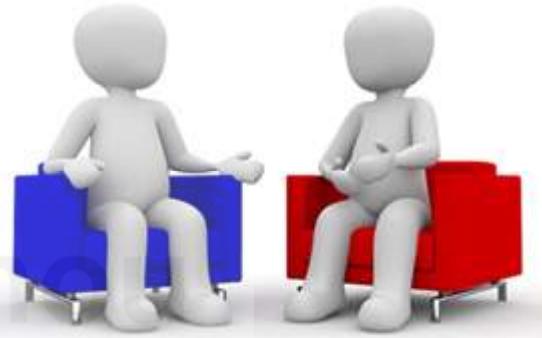
‘Class 6’, announced the teacher. ‘This is a new boy. He comes from India. His name is Jaspal Singh.’

1.5 SMALL TALK

In the sections below we will discuss how conversation is carried on about topics like the weather, food, entertainment etc.

1.5.1 Talking about the Weather

Weather is a very easy subject to start a conversation. This is because all participants in a conversation share knowledge about the weather. The weather is ever-changing, and so can direct the course of the conversation for a brief while at least. The topic is, moreover, neutral in nature — there is no danger of getting too personal, or of holding offensively strong opinions about this topic. The British are legendary for making remarks about the weather, and are the subject of many jokes in this regard.



Now read this sample of a conversation about the weather:

“Terribly hot isn’t it?”

“The temperature has touched 42 degrees according to the weather report today.”

“We are just in the middle of May. More than a month to go.”

“But the news reports say the monsoon will be early this year. It’s expected to hit the Kerala coast around the 28th of May.”

“Hope that’s true!”

Notice that the shared information of the two interlocutors makes it easy for them to take turns.

- Turn-taking is very important for the smooth flow of conversation.

As a response to what one speaker has said the second speaker continues or adds information. This implies that good listening is important to maintain the flow of conversation. If one of the participants is distracted — if s/he is not listening, the flow of conversation will be disturbed and uneven, because s/he will not be able to respond. Similarly, a person who doesn’t allow the others to “get in a word edgeways” in a conversation is a bore!

Check your progress 4

- 1) Arrange the following utterances made by two speakers, Arvind and Bina, about the weather into a coherent piece of dialogue. The first two sentences which is an exchange of greeting, is given:

Arvind: Morning!

Bina: Nice, pleasant morning!

Arvind: It's lovely. There's a nip in the air.

Arvind: How far are you going?

Arvind: Hope this weather continues for some time.

Arvind: That'd be simply great. I'll be with you in a minute.

Bina: Just right for a good long walk. Care to join me?

Bina: But the days are warming up.

Bina: Just up to the Nature Park, and a brisk walk by the poolside to look at the dew on the leaves and the buds before it gets up.

Activity 2

- A) Try speaking to a friend in a similar way about the weather
- B) Watch the weather forecast of a television news programme. Note down some of the words and phrases used by the presenter.

1.5.2 Personal Matters

People and what they do are interesting topics for conversation too. While the word ‘gossip’ does have a derogatory sense, it would be a very drab life indeed if we didn’t talk about others and ourselves. Most encounters begin with enquiring about the welfare of one’s family members. If we are among friends, it is also quite usual to talk about the activities of other common friends. This is also one way in which people keep up with others who have moved away.

We might also happen to meet strangers. While some people may find personal questions embarrassing, they often serve to forge a friendly bond between two human beings.

Read this conversation from a short story. Here we see two strangers exchanging not only personal information but also their views on life,

thyme = time, even native speakers of English may have accents peculiar to particular regions. The beginning of this story gives us a clue to this speaker’s accent:

I SIGHTED him on the bench outside the lone cafe overlooking Rydal Water, the placid idyllic lake behind Wordsworth’s Rydal Mount Cottage in England’s enchanting Lake District He was dressed in grimy black clothes and it must have been months since he had shaved or showered.

“What’s the thyme?” he called out.
“What?”
“The thyme”, he said, pointing to the wrist.
“Oh, the time is 5.20,” I said, trying hard to place his accent. Was he Scottish or Irish?

and the changing times:

“You seem sad. What’s the matter?”

I hesitated. Should I confess to a stranger?

Then I decided to drop my guard. “I lost my job. Three weeks ago.”

“Ha!” he snorted, as if he had heard a joke, “So that’s the problem? Don’t worry. After the war, I thought I had lost everything. A couple of years later, I was back on my feet, hale and hearty. When my wife Rose... Rosemary died, I thought I was a goner. I roamed here and there. But I am okay now. Thyme is the greatest healer. Thyme will pass. You will get a new job and you will forget you were out of one.”

“None of my business, but why did you lose your job?” he continued, slurping the lemonade.

I shrugged. “They told me I couldn’t relate to the youngsters... the new generation. I was a disciplinarian, an ogre to this generation’s junkies. I couldn’t stand their coming late, their clothes, their flirtations. So I got tough. It was a question of them or me. The management decided to get rid of me.”

“Ha!” he snorted again. Much to my consternation. I could see no humour here.

“The thymes, they are a changin,” he sang merrily. “Mister, you gotta change too. Can’t remain the same. Don’t worry. You will, you will. It will just take some thyme.”

“What do I do till I get a new job?”

He scratched his beard. “You know what? Confronting thyme — pure, uncommitted, unoccupied thyme — is a terrifying experience for a human being. But once you learn it, it does good for the soul. Imagine no TV, no movies, no pubs, no theatre, no distractions at all. For example, being out in a place like this. What can you do but stand and stare? At the water, at the geese and the ducks. Sometimes nothing moves for hours. That’s what I am trying to do. Confront thyme. It does good for the soul. It tells us worrying isn’t any good.”

(From the Hindu)

Activity 3

Look up the dictionary to understand what the underlined words mean:

I thought I was a goner.

You gotta change too.

Check Your Progress 5

Find out the meanings of these expressions. You may consult a dictionary or ask a friend. Look under the word ‘foot’ in the dictionary:

Be back on one’s feet:

Find one’s feet:

Put one’s feet up:

Fall on one's feet:

Have both feet on the ground:

1.5.3 Food

Another favourite topic that lends itself to small talk is food, whether it be talk about the new or popular eating places in town or the fruits of the season.

In the following piece of conversation, an offer of fruit leads to a conversation about personal tastes and nostalgic memories that the fruit evokes in the participants

“Fresh guavas from our orchard.”

“Really! They seem to be just ripe.”

“Yes with guavas you want them just right; not too raw nor too ripe.”

“Here’s some salt and pepper. Sprinkle some.”

“Reminds me of times back in the village. We would perch ourselves on the branches and merrily munch away, story book in one hand.”

“Glorious days. You don’t really get that natural taste now, with all these artificial manures and pesticide sprays.”

“Mmm. Anyway from your orchard... That makes it special.”

Notice the turns in comment and response. Each comment links itself up to the next in a chain, generating a cluster of ideas triggered off by the first offer of fruit.

The subject of the first sentence is guavas.

The exclamation “Really” is a response to the first statement, an expression of wonder and acknowledgement. “They” is a pronoun substituting ‘guavas’ in the first statement.

The last word ‘just ripe’ is taken on for comment in sentence 3.

Sentence 4 adds an instruction.

Sentence 5 triggers a memory.

Sentence 6 “glorious days” refers to the times back in the village”.

The last utterance links up with the first rounding up the exchange. The word that links it to the first is “orchard”.

The conversation might have ended in two utterances, if the second speaker had accepted the fruit with just a “Thank you”. It is part of the art of conversation to find something to say that pleases the other person, here, a comment on the fruits being just ripe enough to be at their most tasty. Again, the other person keeps the conversation going by agreeing. If learning to disagree and to pick weaknesses in the opposition’s argument is the art of debate, the art of conversation would appear to be learning to be pleasant and agreeable.

This is what is called the ‘co-operative principle’ in conversation.

Activity 4

Respond to these comments:

“I love pineapple juice on ice cream.”

“My brother is allergic to oranges.”

“Are you a vegetarian?”

“Coconut water in these dog days is such a relief!”

“The Chinese food we get in Indian restaurants is not really Chinese!”

1.5.4 Entertainment

Like weather and food, entertainment in a village, town or city is usually talked about a great deal. This again is shared information and leads to the strengthening of bonds. People talk about the places they have visited or events they have watched either to inform others or to comment on shared experiences. Cricket, football and tennis matches also provide food for conversation.

Read this conversation:

- A) Match has got interesting.
- B) What rubbish! We need 12 runs in the last over.
- A) Don't be stupid! We have got our best batsman at the crease.
- B) But you can't trust the other. He is a bowler!
- A) Daniel won't need to do much. Sridhar will hit a four or a six.
- B) That's downright silly! He never plays well under pressure.
- A) Hurray! Here is the six. We will win this match.

You will notice that in informal conversation, speakers usually drop the polite tone. Expressions like “Don't be stupid!”, “That's downright silly!” etc. are used without really meaning to be rude.

Check Your Progress 6

Underline the expressions that are colloquial (used only in informal conversation) in the following sets of dialogue. First has been done as an example:

- a) “Where're you off to?”
“To get myself some food. Coming along?”
“Nope. Plenty to do here.”
- b) “What shirt are you going to put on?”
“What shirt? It doesn't matter. A white shirt.”
“You're not going to wear a suit? Wait, I'll bring you an aspirin.”
“I don't want an aspirin.”
“But you yourself said you had a headache.”
“Leave me alone.”
“Well, it's your health, not mine.”

- c) “Hello, Doctor! don’t you recognize me, eh?

Doctor looks unsure.

“You’ve forgotten! Weren’t we neighbours? We used to play tennis occasionally at the Community Club.”

“You still don’t recognize me, eh? Take a good look! It’s Freda, the daughter of Mr. P. L. Joseph!”

1.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we looked at some of the ways in which we greet, introduce, welcome, invite, accept or decline invitations and take leave.

The phrases given in the Unit need not be learnt by heart but indicate ways in which everyday communicative functions are performed.

You would have noticed that conversation does not begin or end abruptly. Politeness principles suggest gradual beginnings and endings.

In this unit we looked at some examples of ‘small talk’. This could be about the weather, common acquaintances, sports or entertainment or current events. You also got familiar with some informal expressions used in everyday speech.

1.7 ANSWERS

Activity 1

- i) ‘Can’t believe it! How nice to see you after such a long time!’
- ii) ‘Good evening! So glad to see you’
- iii) ‘How lovely! You are just the person I was thinking of.’
- iv) ‘Shweta! How are you? So good to see you.’
- v) ‘Good morning! Vintex Consultants.’ (on the telephone)

Check Your Progress 1

- i) I don’t I do not
- ii) I wasn’t I was not
- iii) They don’t They do not
- iv) I couldn’t I could not
- v) Let’s not Let us not

Check Your Progress 2

g1, e2, c3, d4, a5, b6, f6

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Social relationship is between the speakers:
 - i) [Leave-taking or parting] [A professor and his guest, perhaps a professional colleague]

- ii) [Greeting] [Colleagues at work: Bernie is David's superior or senior]
 - iii) [Greeting] [A boss and a newly appointed person]
 - iv) [Greeting and extending an invitation] [friends]
 - v) [Leave-taking or parting] [An Inspector and a person who has helped him in his inquiries]
- 2) i) Tom is a teacher. He is speaking to someone who doesn't know him, so he introduces himself and apologizes for his unexpected visit to their house. He is a little embarrassed.
- ii) Jaspal is a new boy from India, and this is his first day at a school in England. A teacher takes him to his class teacher, and the class teacher introduces him to the class.

Check Your Progress 4

Arvind : Morning!

Bina : Nice, pleasant morning!

Arvind : It's lovely. There's a nip in the air.

Bina : But the days are warming up.

Arvind : Hope this weather continues for some time.

Bina : Just right for a good long walk, Care to join me?

Arvind : How far are you going?

Bina : Just up to the Nature Park, and a brisk walk by the poolside to look at the dew on the leaves and the buds before it hots up.

Arvind : That'd be simply great. I'll be with you in a minute.

Activity 2

Do it yourself.

Activity 3

Do it yourself.

Activity 4

Do it yourself.

Check Your Progress 5

Be back on one's feet: Well or successful again after being ill or having problems.

Find one's feet: to be able to act confidently and independently

Put one's feet up: to rest or relax

Fall on one's feet: to have good luck after a difficult period.

Have both feet on the ground: be practical

Check Your Progress 6

- a) "Where're you off to?"

“To get myself some food. Coming along?”

“Nope. Plenty to do here.”

- b) “What shirt are you going to put on?”

“What shirt? It doesn’t matter. A white shirt.”

“You’re not going to wear a suit? Wait, I’ll bring you an aspirin.”

“I don’t want an aspirin.”

“But you yourself said you had a headache.”

“Leave me alone.”

“Well, it’s your health, not mine.”

- c) “Hello, Doctor! don’t you recognize me, eh?

Doctor looks unsure.

“You’ve forgotten! Weren’t we neighbours? We used to play tennis occasionally at the Community Club.”

“You still don’t recognize me, eh? Take a good look! It’s Freda, the daughter of Mr. P. L. Joseph!”



UNIT 2 MAKING ENQUIRIES/ASKING QUESTIONS

Structure

- 2.0 Objectives
 - 2.1 Introduction
 - 2.2 Enquiries
 - 2.2.1 Personal Enquiries
 - 2.2.2 Condolence
 - 2.2.3 Dinner Talk
 - 2.2.4 Enquiries about Services
 - 2.2.5 Enquiries about Procedures
 - 2.3 Attention in Listening
 - 2.4 Let Us Sum Up
 - 2.5 Answers
-



2.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you should be able to

- use politeness formulae while making enquiries or asking questions.
 - seek clarifications if you find something difficult to understand, and
 - thank the respondent for the information you received.
-

2.1 INTRODUCTION

All of us need to seek information from others to perform various functions in everyday life. To be successful in getting the information we require, it is necessary that we are clear and courteous in the way we ask questions. Curt and abrupt ways of asking questions may put off the person we are speaking to and not evoke the kind of response we wish to get.



Ways of expressing politeness differ from language to language. In English, modal verbs are used to introduce politeness in questions. Most often people are misunderstood as being rude because they ask direct questions. In this unit we will examine pieces of conversation which illustrate politeness in making enquiries.

2.2 ENQUIRIES

We make enquiries face-to-face or on telephone about people, services, procedures or events. We will discuss enquiries of different kinds in the following sections:

2.2.1 Personal Enquiries

We might often have to enquire about people. We might not know who we wish to meet and would like to confirm whether we are talking to the right person.

Read this piece of conversation between a visitor and an old man:

The visitor knows that the person is Captain Hagberd because he meets him at his residence, but he wishes to confirm this.

‘You must be Captain Hagberd,’

‘Yes, I am,’

‘You’ve been waiting for your son, I believe?’

‘My son Harry,...He’s coming home to-morrow.’

Instead of asking the direct question,

“Are you Captain Hagberd?” he couches it in the form of a conjecture. The next question gets a little more personal but is again not asked directly but in the form of a statement with the question tagged on in “I believe”??”

Contrast this with the direct questions in the informal conversation below between a husband and wife:

‘What are you busy at Laxman?’

I am trying to complete this jig-saw puzzle.

Ohh you are always doing your puzzles! Why don’t we go for a movie instead?

- Direct questions begin with wh-words: *what, where, when, why* and *how*. This is the basic form of the question, but we do not always ask questions in this form. The questions are suitably toned down and modified according to the relationship between two speakers.

It is not quite polite to ask a person his or her name directly. We use modal verbs to frame polite questions:

Could I know your name please?

May I know your name please?

Your name please? — with a rise in the tone

If the person has been introduced to you already but you have missed the name,



you could ask for it this way:

I'm afraid I didn't get your name.

If you want to be sure where the person is working, you could say:

Did you say you were working in ...?

Telephone Enquiries

Receiving a call

It is telephone courtesy to identify yourself when you pick up the receiver. An individual or a private residence might say:

“Jayaram here.” OR “Jayaram.” OR “Jayaram speaking.”

“Hello, Mr. Shorey’s residence.”

A business establishment is expected to identify itself when it receives a call:

“Good Morning, India Travel Bureau. May I help you?”

“Hello, this is the Grindus Bank. How may we help you?”

Some of you may have heard an automated message, followed by music:

“Thank you for calling Global Consultants. Our operator will be with you in a minute. Please wait.”

“Thank you for calling Triumph Corporation. To proceed in English, dial 1 ...”

The personal counterpart of such a message is the answering machine. The owner of the machine records a friendly message on this machine, which the caller hears:

“Hi, I’m Geeta. Thank you for calling. I’m sorry I’m not able to respond to you right now. But if you would like to leave a message, please do so, after you hear a beep.”

Making a call

Sometimes the person whom you call does not identify himself or herself. They may wish to preserve their privacy, and want you to identify yourself first. If you are not sure you have the right number, you may say:

“Hello, is that 2776 5434, please? May I talk to Mr. Madhukar?”

In any case, persons who make a call are expected to identify themselves, and say who they wish to speak to, and why:

“Hi Geeta, this is Prakash, I’m here in Pune for a day, and ...” [speaking to an answering machine]

“Hello, may I speak to Mr. Anil Shorey, please? I’m calling from Jaipur. My name is Ravinder.”

“Good Morning. I’m Madhukar. Could you let me know the fare to ...”

“Good afternoon. I’m a regular customer of your bank, and I have a problem with my statement ...”

“Good Morning. I’m calling from Friends’ Stationers. Could you please tell me ...”

Making Enquiries/Asking Questions

Identifying the Caller

But if the caller does not identify himself or herself, some of the ways you might ask about the identity of a person are:

May I know who I am speaking to?

Could you repeat your name please?

May I know who is calling?

Did you say you were speaking from Chennai?

If the person the caller wishes to speak to is unavailable, you may say so politely, and ask if the caller wishes to call back, or to leave a message:

“I’m sorry Mr. Jayaram is out of town this week. Would you like me to give you his cell phone number?”

“I’m sorry Mr. Jayaram is in a meeting right now. Would you like to call again after 1 pm.

“I’m sorry Mr. Jayaram cannot come to the phone right now. Would you like to leave a message for him?”

Bad manners on the telephone

Some common problems we notice with people who make or receive calls are the following:

- Failing to identify themselves
- Not making sure they have the right number, or have dialed the right number, and insisting on speaking to a person they think they have reached
- Speaking unclearly, or with pan or food in the mouth
- Speaking unnecessarily loudly

The last two points need particular attention. We have all heard people speaking in public on their cell phones so loudly that the people around them soon come to know all about their business. The telephone is designed to pick up your voice quite well even at a low volume, and if you speak clearly in a normal or soft voice, you are more likely to be heard and understood than if you shout without bothering to pronounce your words properly.

We shall give you some hints and exercises on voice control and articulation in this block, which will help you in face-to-face or public speaking as well as in speaking on the telephone.

2.2.2 Condolence

Enquiring about personal bereavement is a very sensitive matter. While it is customary to enquire about how a person died, the way we ask a bereaved person about the death has to be delicate.

Here is a situation:

Shraddha meets her classmate Vipin a few days after his father's death. Read the conversation between the two:

"Extremely sorry Vipin. I can understand how painful it must be."

"mm"

"I heard it was all too sudden."

"Yes. He was so active. Had gone to work that day. I just can't believe he isn't there."

It's very difficult. Was it at home?"

"He complained of mild discomfort soon after dinner and we rushed him to the hospital, but even before we could reach there,..."

"Your mother must be inconsolable."

"Yes, this was the last thing she expected would happen."

"I'll come home with you today to see her."

"Thanks Shraddha."

- Notice how Shraddha makes a series of statements to evoke responses from Vipin. Direct questions sound very abrasive when talking to a person who is in need of comfort and consolation.

2.2.3 Dinner Talk

Saraf and Lee Wan are business colleagues. Saraf takes Lee Wan out to dinner after work. The two of them are relaxed.

Lee Wan: Nice place!

Saraf: Yes, I like the ambience. I often come here with my family.

Lee Wan: Kids in school?

Saraf: Just one. He is in the tenth.

Lee Wan: I'd like to know what schools are like here. I mean the system they follow.

Saraf: Well, we have three different examination boards and different schools choose the Board they wish to get affiliated to.

Lee Wan: I suppose it's ten years of school and then Junior College?

Saraf: Yes, That's right. Is it the same in Singapore too?

Lee Wan: Yes after the 10th you can opt for JC or go to a Polytechnic.

Saraf: We do have that choice too, here. Only, that nobody willingly goes to the Polytechnic. There's a mad rush to get into the professional colleges.

Lee Wan: Is that easy, here? Not so back home.

Saraf: There are a large number of private colleges where you can get in for a fee.

Lee Wan: The Government allows that?

Saraf: Yes. But, of course, they are very expensive compared to the Government colleges. ... Here's the menu. Make your choice.

- Notice that some of the questions are not direct. They may begin as statements but expect a response. Sometimes as in “Kids in School?” the question is implied by the rising intonation. There are one or two direct yes or no questions which seek information.

2.2.4 Enquiries about Services

We often need to enquire about services available and might ask friends to help us. Supposing you are interested in going abroad for studies and want to know where to get the details, you might ask your friends about it.

Read the conversation below:

- Puneet : Shailesh, you are just the person I was looking for.
- Shailesh : Why, what's the matter?
- Puneet : Shailesh, you have so many of your relatives studying abroad. I thought you might be able to help me.
- Shailesh : Do you want to go abroad?
- Puneet : I think getting a postgraduate degree abroad would help me.
- Shailesh : Where do you want to go?
- Puneet : I'll be finishing BDS this May. I'd like to go for further studies to the US or Australia. I want to know how I can apply for scholarships.
- Shailesh : Ketan Mishra studied abroad. He is now the study-abroad college counselor at MMK College in Baroda. He runs an online service. Write to him and he will help you.
- Puneet : Thanks, what's the address?
- Shailesh : counselor@educationtimes.com

Puneet and Shailesh are close friends. So their questions are quite direct.

Notice the phrase: “I want to know...” This is the basic form of an enquiry for information. This can be modified in the following ways:

- I'd like to know.
- I wish to know...
- Could you tell me...
- Would you be able to tell me...
- I'm looking for information regarding
- I wonder if you could help me in this...

2.2.5 Enquiries about Procedures

Let us now look at questions regarding how things are done and the way in which we seek clarifications when someone explains things to us.

- Vinita : That's a nice thing you have there. I've never seen anything like it before.

- Sumi : Oh! This? This is what we call a terrarium.
- Vinita : I've heard of an 'aquarium', **but a 'terrarium'?**
- Sumi : Yeah, just as we keep fish in a glass bowl filled with water, we can keep plants in a terrarium.
- Vinita : Why is it called a terrarium?
- Sumi : Like we put in water in an aquarium, here we put in soil - we put soil into a glass case with little pebbles and stones, and put plants in it.
- Vinita : That's nice. But the glass container is closed. **Don't the plants need air?**
- Sumi : This is the way it works: The leaves of the plants release water vapour. This condenses on the glass, trickles into the soil in the container and rewaters the plants. If the container is airtight, this process can be left as it is.
- Vinita : How do you make it? What are the things that we need?
- Sumi : You need small river stones or gravel, some finely ground charcoal, some soil, some peat, some sand and some sticks.
- Vinita : **We mix them all up and put them in the container?**
- Sumi : No, no. First a layer of gravel, about an inch or so. This is for the drainage at the bottom of the container. Then a light layer of finely ground charcoal.
- Vinita : What's that for?
- Sumi : To keep away the bacteria.
- Vinita : **Then the rest?**
- Sumi : Two parts soil mixed with two parts peat and one part sand.
- Vinita : I'm sorry, but I don't know what peat is.
- Sumi : Peat is formed by decaying plants below the surface of the soil.
- Vinita : How thick should the soil layer be?
- Sumi : Two to three inches deep. If you like, you can mound up soil higher in the centre to make it look like a natural landscape.
- Vinita : **Then we put the plants in?** What kinds of plants would grow well?
- Sumi : Common houseplants: ferns, prayer plants and moss. Avoid cactuses. You need to fix the roots firmly in the soil after removing excess soil from them.
- Vinita : How do we maintain them?
- Sumi : In the beginning, water lightly. If there is too much water vapour clouding the sides of the container, remove the lid for a day or two. Keep it in a slightly shaded spot. Don't let the leaves touch the sides of the container. Remove plants that are not doing well.
- Vinita : Thanks that was very interesting. Next time you come to my home, you will see a terrarium. If I have any problems, I'll call you up.
- Sumi : Sure. It will be a beautiful addition to your room.

That was an example of how we ask questions about procedures. Some of the questions are direct wh-questions but there are also others which are highlighted in bold which are statements with a rising intonation which function as questions.

Notice the following:

- the preciseness with which every question is answered
- the attention with which the listener follows the procedure and seeks clarifications when in doubt
- the listener's anticipation of what the next step is and hazarding a guess which is either approved, if right, or explained, if not.

Also notice how the listener asks for the meaning of the word 'peat', just by stating that she has not understood it, prefacing it with "I'm sorry".

Check your progress 1

Convert the following route description to Ganesh Himal and the Tibetan mountain range into a dialogue between a Nepali hotel executive and a French national on a sight-seeing tour:

If one has a few days of leisure when one feels like going for a short trek, then Lower Langtang could be the right choice. For foreigners, trekking permits and national Park entry tickets are required. These can be obtained at the immigration office. You can first take a bus to Dhunche. The 120km drive from Kathmandu to Dhunche is very picturesque. You can rest in one of the comfortable lodges in Dhunche for the night. Rasuwa Dhunche has a mix of modern buildings. The traditional Tamang village is just below the road. The next morning you can drive down or start your trek to Bharku six kms away from Dhunche. From the road can be seen the spectacular Ganesh Himal and the Tibetan mountain range.

You could begin this way:

French tourist: Excuse me, I wonder if you could help me.

Hotel executive: Sure. Tell me what can I do for you? Are you here on a long visit?

2.3 ATTENTION IN LISTENING

When we listen to English spoken informally, we need to make reasonable guesses about what is being said. Our surroundings may be noisy. The speaker may be walking along with us, and his or her face may sometimes be turned away from us as s/he speaks. In any case, informal speech is faster



and less clear than speech on the radio or at a lecture. Look at the sentence below as it appears in writing. Then look at how this might sound to us in fast speech.

Mrs. Gandhi went to Parliament at once.

'ms Gandhwentu Parlimnatwuns'

Notice that in fast speech

- 1) Words ‘run together’
- 2) Some sounds are left out, or unclear (these are the ‘unstressed’ sounds)

When we listen to a language we know our knowledge of the language helps us to guess what is being said. We know the words of the language, and we know how these words are put together to carry meaning. But when you listen to English, if your own English is not very strong, then you can use only your best guess about the context - the meaning that the speaker probably wants to convey - to help you understand.

Sometimes our guesses can be quite amusingly wrong. One speaker spoke the words “*My friend Shanthi...*” Perhaps the speaker mispronounced the name *Shanthi* a little.

The person listening said. “Your French aunty? I didn’t know you had a French aunty!” A linguist called Victoria Fromkin has written an entire book about such mishearing, which she calls “slips of the ear”, on the analogy of a “slip of the tongue” in speech.

Here is a sample of actual spoken English. Notice that some words and some parts of words are spoken louder and clearer than others. We have indicated this by using capital letters. Since the person is also thinking as they are speaking, there are pauses and ‘hesitation markers’ like *er* or *um*

[Question: Are immigrants more law-abiding? Why?]

Answer: “BeCAUSE i THINK they havetheir OWN – er – very STRONG – er – CULTural nd reLIGIOUS – er “ they KEEP them SELVES very MUCH to themselves.

In general, all “content words” – nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs are “stressed”, spoken clearly. All the “little words” – prepositions, auxiliary verbs, conjunctions, and so on – are “unstressed”.

It is essential for you to start listening to English as it is ordinarily spoken — in unscripted interviews. Of course you will not be able to understand it completely. Begin by listening to short stretches of speech — just a couple of sentences, for less than half a minute at a time. If you can record speech and listen to it again and again, do so. Otherwise just listen to the same speaker as much as you can, everyday, for a week. By the end of a week of listening you will find a difference in how much you can understand of what is being spoken. The easiest way to begin is to listen to the news headlines, where the content is predictable. Many of you are perhaps already listening to sports commentary. Weather bulletins are also easy to understand for beginners.

2.4 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you learnt some of the ways in which enquiries are made. The basic question forms are either questions beginning with *wh-* words or *yes* or *no* questions. However, the degree of politeness that we wish to maintain suggests other forms in which questions may be asked. Polite forms of questioning usually are indirect and make use of modal verbs. Remember this when you ask questions.

2.5 ANSWERS

Check your progress 1

Here is a sample dialogue, yours could be different.

French tourist :

Excuse me; I wonder if you could help me.

Hotel executive :

Sure. Tell me what can I do for you? Are you here on a long visit'?



French tourist :

Well, I'm here for a week and would like to go for a short trek, say, about five days or so.

Tourist executive : I think, you should consider trekking to lower Langtang. You would need a trekking permit and tickets for entry to National Park.

French tourist : Where do I obtain these?

Hotel executive : You can obtain them from the immigration office.

French tourist : O. K. No problem. I will do that. Can you tell me the route I should take?

Hotel executive : You first take a bus to Dhunche from Kathmandu. It is a 120km drive and very scenic. You could rest in Dhunche in one of the many comfortable lodges which are fairly modern. The next morning you could drive to Bharku which is about 6 hours from Dhunche. Here the view of Ganesh Himal and the Tibetan mountain range is spectacular. Your trek begins from here...

UNIT 3 GROUP DISCUSSIONS AND MEETINGS

Structure

3.0 Objectives

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Group Discussions (GDs)

 3.2.1 GDs at Interviews and GDs in General: Functional Differences

 3.2.2 Essentials of a Group Discussion

 3.2.3 What to Say and How to Say It

 3.2.4 Group Communication Skills

 3.2.4.1 Overcome Differences in Communication Style

 3.2.4.2 Acknowledge Differences in Gender and Culture

 3.2.4.3 Effective Involvement

 3.2.5 Maintaining Roles in a Group

 3.2.6 Group Processing and Assessment

3.3 Meetings

 3.3.1 Agenda of a Meeting

 3.3.2 Preparing for a Meeting

3.4 Reading: Role of Participants

3.5 Vocabulary

3.6 Let Us Sum Up

3.7 Answers

3.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit, we will first take up Group Discussions and cover the following topics:

- Planning what to say and how to say it in a group discussion
- Maintaining roles
- Group communication skills
- Group Processing and assessment

We then take up Meetings, where we will discuss:

- Agenda of a meeting
- Preparing for a meeting

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Group Discussion

You might have often chatted with your friends on various topics. It could be

about the prospects of a course, about a film or a book, pros and cons of politics and so on. As humans we love to talk and express our ideas on issues of our interest. In the process we learn about others' points of view on the same, agree or disagree with them, and help ourselves with a more definite understanding of a situation or a problem.

When you interact with many people on a topic a lot of ideas get generated. If done in a systematic way, these ideas prove beneficial in many ways such as solving problems or creating new avenues. When the conversation is intended to serve an objective in an organized manner, it transcends being a mere 'chat' and is called a group discussion.

A group discussion is a means of interaction within a team or between various teams in an organization. It often determines managerial success. It is a common procedure in competitive exams and job-interviews and is a standard component towards the end of an interview, which the short listed candidates have to take.

The interviewers and examiners nowadays find it necessary to evaluate a candidate's capability to work as a member of a team. Through such group discussions the interviewer looks for the candidates'

- Knowledge and awareness about a topic
- Creative aptitude
- Ability to work as a member of a team
- Ability to lead a team, especially as an opinion leader
- Conferencing skills

To make a group discussion successful you should have good listening skills, an approach to contribute ideas, and show a positive interdependence. You need to convey your thoughts in a meaningful way, and at the same time as a member of a team.

As a result a group discussion is a very useful technique to fulfill many purposes. For example, it is used to

- Generate ideas (in preparation for something such as a film or a seminar)
- Summarize
- Assess levels of skill and understanding
- Reexamine ideas presented earlier
- Review a situation
- Process learning outcomes of a session
- Compare and contrast theories, issues and interpretations
- Brainstorm applications of theory to life

Group Discussion



3.2 GROUP DISCUSSIONS (GDs)

3.2.1 GDs at Interviews and GDs in General: Functional Differences

We have said that group discussions can form a part of a meeting, or form a part of the interview process. Although group discussions (GDs) in general and GDs in an interview have a similar structure, they have some functional differences. In a classroom or an organization the purpose of a GD is to generate thinking, enhance group communication skills, facilitate a successful exchange of ideas and derive a conclusion. It may not be very formal as the members as well as the observer are known to each other.

GDs can also be part of competitive examinations and job interviews. In the civil services, MBA admission process and Armed Forces and Private Sector examinations, GDs are conducted to observe a candidate's suitability for the course or the job. Hereafter GD in job interviews and GD in examinations will be referred together as GD in interviews.

The various functional differences can be categorized as follows:

GD in an organization or classroom	GD in interviews
1) The main purpose is to <u>generate thinking</u> on a particular topic.	The main purpose is to see who <u>communicates well</u> in a group.
2) The role of an observer may be maintained by a <u>member</u> within the group. In a class discussion, the <u>instructor</u> also observes group interaction and gives feedback.	The <u>interviewers</u> maintain the role of the observers. There may not be any feedback given to the candidates, except the interview result.
3) The roles of a team captain, a recorder, an encourager or a reflector are <u>decided in advance</u> , either by the group members or by the instructor.	The roles are not defined before the discussion. They <u>come up</u> according to the candidates' capabilities.
4) The topics depend upon the organization's interests, related to the group's work and responsibilities or the instructor's <u>requirements in a classroom</u> .	The topics are chosen in such a way that everyone is expected to be aware of it. For example, a topic related to current affairs.
5) The members know each other fairly well, so there is <u>no introduction required</u> at the beginning. By referring to a person who had made a relevant point, the discussion encourages further interaction in the group.	Usually the <u>members introduce themselves</u> when they speak. Mentioning the name of a member while referring to her/him might help the interviewers determine your listening skills.

3.2.2 Essentials of a Group Discussion

In recent times group discussion has emerged as an important and potent tool for testing candidates for recruitment as this technique at one go analyzes almost all the behaviour competencies and some of the generic skills we have already described in earlier units. Therefore your awareness of what this technique is, how it works and how to participate in GD becomes essential for a successful performance.

There are certain conditions that must be met for a group discussion to be successful. Some of these conditions are dictated by the nature of the task, but there are some general points you must remember in order to be a successful participant. These are:

- a) There is only one topic for discussion
- b) All the members must express their views only on **this topic** under discussion.
- c) Members must take turns to talk; they must listen to one another, talk to one another and respond to one another.
- d) They must put forward more than one point of view on the topic.

Members of the group must also follow certain rules for the success of the group discussion. These are:

- a) **Equality, freedom to express, and respect for participating members.**

The participants are all treated as equals and must have regard for the opinions of each member of the group. The participants are free to offer their opinions without fear or anxiety, pressure, ridicule or embarrassment.

- b) **Reasonableness, orderliness and truthfulness**

All the participants must come to the group discussion with an open mind; they are not to be dogmatic or have pre-determined opinions; they all must be willing to listen to reason and to accommodate others' views on the subject. The participants must observe order and take turns to talk; must listen to others and not shout down opinions they do not like. The participants must speak what they believe to be true; they must not remain silent, be reticent or vague in their views.

Anything that violates the spirit of free and open discussion or joint enquiry breaches the spirit of GD and one must guard against this. Some examples of breach of rules are –

- i) interrupting the speaker or not allowing the speaker to complete his/her contribution.
- ii) shouting down people whose views one does not like.
- iii) refusing to listen to reason and/or evidence.
- iv) dogmatic in one's own opinion even in the face of evidence to the contrary.
- v) agreeing to a point without believing in it or under duress or threat.

This does not mean that you cannot 'interrupt' someone. You can do so at the appropriate moment and without causing offense.

The discussion group can take up any topic for discussion provided the topic poses a question and requires a joint enquiry. A discussion question invites joint enquiry whereas other forms of discussion e.g. debates discourage it. Hence a discussion question has to be an interrogative sentence, not a word or phrase. It must **not** be framed as a ‘yes/no’ or ‘either/or’ question and must **not** be broad or ambiguous.

Check Your Progress 1

Read the text once again a bit slowly this time and attempt the following:-

- 1) Are the following statements true or false according to the text? If false, rewrite the true version.
 - i) You must not question what the Manager says in GD.
 - ii) All GD members, juniors and seniors, are treated equal.
 - iii) In GD, it is better not to say anything that may offend the management.
 - iv) You should stick to your point of view even if you feel that you are wrong.
 - v) In GD, there is only one topic for discussion.
- 2) Are the following topics suitable for Group Discussion? Why/Why not?
 - i) Higher education
 - ii) Should we develop rural or urban areas in India?
 - iii) Tourism
 - iv) How can India become self-sufficient in energy resources?
 - v) Research in health issues should be left to the private sector.

3.2.3 What to Say and How to Say It

You can begin by saying:

- 1) To begin with, I would say, ...
 - 2) The first thing that comes to my mind when I think of ...
 - 3) We may think that it's the government's responsibility to deal with corruption but...
 - 4) Let us first look at the facts known to us, for example, ..
 - 5) A very good morning to all of you. I strongly support... because...
- If you speak after someone you can continue with*
- 6) “As my friend has just said/spoken persuasively about/argued...
To involve others in your thinking you may say
 - 7) “You will all agree with me that...”

You can begin in a way that suits your own style of speaking. Try to include others in your conversation to convey that you are open to others' views as well. You can also do this by using ‘we’ and ‘us’ instead of ‘I’ and ‘me’. It is important that whatever you say fulfills a purpose (gives information, agrees or disagrees with a point already mentioned, illustrates a point or justifies your actions).

You need to consider the five **whats** given below:

- What is known to some or most of the participants?
- What may be unacceptable to some or most of the participants?
- What level of detail is needed?
- What depth ideas is required to deal with possible questions related to the topic?
- What must be said at a point, and what is to be retained for the appropriate time?

Asking for **clarification** is very important when you do not understand what another person has said. You should also respect others' contributions to the discussion even if you may not agree with everyone. Remember to address the points rather than the persons. Try to give equal time to everyone in the group for speaking. During the discussion, you may use phrases like:

- 1) I would like to add a point here, ...
- 2) As you have rightly said ...
- 3) I think we forgot to consider the fact that ...
- 4) Coming back to Nikhil's point that examinations should not be mere memory tests...

As you can see, the phrase in (1) is useful to make an additional point, and can be used even to interrupt a speaker. So is (2), which agrees with the previous speaker and adds a point. The phrases in (3) and (4) come in useful to continue the discussion from an earlier point, after a slight gap. Perhaps you wanted to say something but didn't want to interrupt the speaker. With these words, you may refer back to the person and her point when you speak again.



Here are some more suggestions of language which can be used in a group discussion.

Stating an opinion

- It seems to me...
- In my view...

- I tend to think...
- It's obvious that...
- I believe....
- Clearly ...

Interrupting

- Excuse me, may I ask for a clarification on this...
- If I may interrupt...
- Sorry to interrupt but.....

Handling Interruptions

- Sorry, please let me finish.....
- If I may finish what I am saying.....
- Could you please allow me to complete what I'm saying.....?

Moving the discussion on

- Can we go on to think about.....?
- I think we should now move on to consider.....

Expressing Agreement

- I totally agree
- I agree entirely
- I quite agree
- I couldn't agree more
- Absolutely / precisely /exactly
- I think you're right

Expressing disagreement

- I don't agree at all
- I totally disagree
- I think quite differently on this
- I don't really think so
- I'm afraid I can't agree with you there

Checking comprehension / reformulating

- To put that another way...
- If I follow you correctly...
- So what you're saying is...
- Does that mean...?
- Are you saying...?

Making a suggestion

- I suggest that....
- We could.....

- Perhaps we should...
- It might be worth....
- What about.....?
- Why don't we.....?

Activity 1

Here is an excerpt from a group discussion. Read it well and answer the questions that follow.

Observer : “The topic given to you is ‘Should children be allowed to watch TV?’ You need to discuss this in your group for 30 minutes and come to a conclusion.”

Speaker 1 : Good morning friends. In my opinion children should be allowed to watch TV because there are many programmes on TV that are instructive and educative. Cartoons and certain serials are very much liked by children and such sources of entertainment cannot be denied to children. After all they have a right to enjoy TV. Channels like Discovery and National Geographic show very good programmes and provide a lot of general knowledge to children. However parents have to ensure that children watch TV for a short time only.

Speaker 2 : Hello friends, I am of the opinion that watching TV does not help children much. There are many programmes that mislead children. If they are allowed to watch TV, they get habituated to it and lose interest in physical activities. Moreover, watching more TV affects the reading habits of children. They slowly lose their concentration on studies too. Children try to imitate their role models in style and looks, which might become an expensive affair for the parents if not checked early.

From the points mentioned above by Speakers 1 and 2, make a list of those that you agree with:

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And those that you don't agree with:

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Who do you agree with more, Speaker 1 or Speaker 2?

Now can you add a few more points to strengthen your views about the topic?

How do you think the discussion will end? Write one or two lines in illustration.

3.2.4 Group Communication Skills

Positive interdependence is when a group either sinks or swims together. It is met in a group as its members share a task, a goal and common resources. Therefore a feeling of oneness is important in the group members. This also helps them to develop a positive way of speaking in a discussion. For example, using ‘We’ instead of ‘I’ or ‘You’ will show the feeling of positive interdependence. Disagreements are a common possibility in any group discussion. These need to be dealt with in a positive way too. Aggressive behaviour affects a healthy discussion. Remember to address the point of disagreement rather than the person who makes it. **Disagreements** should be reframed in constructive ways:

Say	Instead of
1) I don't think I agree. Could you please explain...	That doesn't make sense at all
2) I disagree because ...	That is not true.
3) I see it differently because...	No, I don't agree.
4) I think we should check what we are supposed to do.	That is not what we are asked to do.
5) It might be better to...	You are dead wrong.
6) Have you considered...	How can you say this?
7) Does everyone agree?	Let's vote on it.
8) I understand how you feel, but I think you might also consider...	That really upsets me!

To be aware of possible differences among group members will help you to frame your ideas well.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) The topic given to you is “Coaching is necessary for academic studies and competitive exams”.

Generate as many ideas as you can on the topic and write them down as they come to your mind (you need not write complete sentences).

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- 2) Now arrange the points in order to arrive at one of the two conclusions below:

i) Coaching is necessary because

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- ii) Coaching is not needed because

- 3) Now think of speaking about your ideas to a group. Start by stating what you are going to say.

3.2.4.1 Overcome Differences in Communication Style

By differences in communication style we mean that everyone does not express their thoughts in the same way. Some ‘think aloud’ composing their thoughts on the fly. That is, they state their views as they think and feel. Since they are comfortable with forceful manner of speaking, they may be uncomfortable with silence in a group. Such an extroverted communication style is completely different from one where people love to ponder on an issue or listen to what everyone else has to say before they speak their mind. They have an introverted communication style and long periods of silence doesn’t disturb them.

As a group member you have to remember that only when you appreciate varied communication styles can you achieve balanced contributions to a group. Occasionally you may step out of your form to encourage each other to participate. Group members with an extroverted style need to periodically relax and silently deliberate on an issue. Those with an introverted style need to periodically encourage themselves (if not be encouraged by others!) to contribute, even if they haven't worked out the problem fully in their heads yet.

3.2.4.2 Acknowledge Differences in Gender and Culture

You may face culture differences when you interact in a group from different cultural backgrounds. This can sometimes make communication difficult. Growing up in a different region, state or country generates differential communication styles. Your style may be quite different from what you face at the time of discussion. Degrees of bluntness, assertiveness in speech, preferences for direct or indirect (roundabout) conversation styles may be some of the patterns based on community upbringing.

You need to remain open to talk in spite of such differences. A group member who is sensitive towards these differences will value this uniqueness and will not hesitate to share his or her ideas with the other members.

It is very common to take up roles in groups based on gender socialization. You may rely on communication styles with which you are most comfortable in *social settings*. However, groups work together best when group members experiment with a variety of roles in groups, even those with which they don't have as much experience.

3.2.4.3 Effective Involvement

Expressing one's views must be well balanced with listening to others, to reach at an understanding as a group. On the other hand, agreeing to any statement offered without any effort to analyze its worth can misfire everything. For an effective group discussion you need to adopt a middle road between the two: one that monopolizes and the other that is passive. An extended conversation that is gradual and steady helps to lead to the integration and synthesis of views. Through an effective discussion, creative, high-energy, and effective learning occurs among all members of the group. In short, a participant of a group discussion needs to ensure that (s)he has group communication skills. For that he or she can check whether he or she has fulfilled the following points after the discussion:

- Incorporated prior knowledge into discussion
- Asked questions in an open-minded way
- Built on the comments of other group members to enhance discussion
- Volunteered ideas in a Constructive manner.
- Helped to summarize the group's progress.
- Identified any missing information in the group answer.

3.2.5 Maintaining Roles in a Group

You may be required to play different roles in a group discussion. The roles are decided before the discussion begins.

- The role of a *team captain* is to keep the group focused on the task. He or she also manages time and mediates conflict.
- The role of a *recorder* is to take down the salient points. He or she also reports back to the group as a whole.
- The *encourager* gives feedback to the group members. He or she is responsible for ensuring that all group members are heard.
- The *reflector* keeps track of dynamics of group process and makes comments about focus, direction, organization, listening skills and participation of all members.

Once a role is decided upon you, try not to switch over to other roles.

In an interview GD, these roles are not decided before but come up according to the candidates' abilities. You may show an interest in playing all the roles or just

one. The role of the team captain is one of leadership. The recorder and the encourager support the smooth functioning of a GD and the reflector steers the process.

These roles are extremely important in a GD that is a part of a meeting. They help to fulfill the objectives of the discussion.

3.2.6 Group Processing and Assessment

Group processing and group assessment is very important to develop effective communication in a group. To assess your group after a group discussion you need to reflect on each other's

- contribution
- way of speaking
- attitude.

This will also help you to understand the role of an observer in a group discussion, especially in an interview GD. As you get feedback from others about your performance in the group you can ponder on your strong and weak points. You can identify your communication style and attitude towards others' views. Listening to each other will facilitate your learning. Questions such as 'What is working?' 'What isn't working?' and 'How can the groups function more effectively?' can be raised for assessment. You can also prepare a group report in this way to determine the areas on which further work is needed.

Check Your Progress 3

Read the following excerpt from a group discussion and observe the different capabilities of the speakers. Give your assessment of each speaker on the basis of skills such as leadership, decision making, logical reasoning and convincing skills. You can explore the traits that are optimistic, constructive, visionary, practical, acceptable and progressive. Then give an overall assessment of the speaker.

The group consists of Koyel, Nirmal, Suman, Rekha, Bhargav, Bala and Jeet. After the topic is chosen, the discussion begins with Suman breaking the ice:

Above all you must not forget that what you say is more important than how you say it. So pay more attention in generating more ideas and views on the topic given, and improve your presentation through practice in a group.

- i) **Suman:** Hi friends! I strongly believe that child care is the sole responsibility of the parents. Every living creature takes care of its young ones. You will agree with me that parents feel responsible to mould their children into healthy, happy and successful human beings with love, respect and care.
- ii) **Nirmal:** Friends, to my mind, child care is the responsibility of everyone. The child is a hope for the parents, the country, and above all mankind. Therefore everyone should take care of it. The contribution of people other than parents right from its childhood makes the child emerge as a good human being, as an artist, a writer, a scientist or an inventor. Teachers, guides and other concerned people must fulfill their share of responsibilities to make the child a successful man or woman. Parents are responsible of

- taking basic care of their children but they are not the only people responsible for the child's mental and physical development.
- iii) **Jeet:** Good afternoon to all! I agree with Suman and also with Nirmal that childcare is definitely the responsibility of the parents. Only their parents provide children with the basic requirements i.e., food, health, clothing and education. They are also responsible to give them a safe and carefree childhood. They take them to doctors when they are sick and bear all their expenditure till they stand on their own feet and get married. They have given birth to the child and they hold themselves responsible for both their success and failure.
 - iv) **Rekha:** Dear friends, I have heard all of you who have spoken so far. I agree that parents do their best to provide the child with everything they can to make their children all rounders. But the basic necessities are not enough for a child's growth. They are of primary importance, but a child cannot develop completely if s/he does not acquire intellectual and technical skills. These may or may not be provided by parents. In order to develop these skills a child must interact with more and more different types of people. The teacher also influences the child. It is the responsibility of every adult to encourage the intellectual development of the child.
 - v) **Bala:** Good afternoon everyone. I believe that childcare is parent's responsibility. They have to take care of the child as they have given birth to it. They take up the responsibilities of their children so that the children will look after them in their old age. Everybody is selfish in this world. The children are the future of the parents and so they give due care to see them grow as healthy and wealthy citizens.
 - vi) **Suman:** I have listened to comments on both sides and I still hold the stand that childcare is parents' responsibility. The parents are the closest to a child and so their role is the most important in making the child an asset to the nation and to mankind. Apart from providing the basic necessities they also support the child to fight all adverse situations in life. In my opinion, family values and strong bonding is the most important step in the development of a child and this is done mostly by the parents.

Check Your Progress 4

Read this excerpt again and answer the questions below:

- 1) Can you guess the topic that was given for the GD?

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- 2) Who do you think has displayed good group communication skills?

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3.3 MEETINGS

A meeting forms a part of the various activities of an organization and serves to bring together the members of the organization to fulfill one or more objectives. It is useful when:

- Opinions from members become necessary to decide on an issue
- Participation of members becomes important to solve a problem
- Explaining previous matters becomes important before taking a decision
- The organization needs to settle conflicts
- The organization needs to communicate sensitive information
- The organization needs to generate new ideas



Meetings as well as group discussions basically help us to communicate our own ideas or views about a topic to others and know others' opinions about the same. But a meeting has a more controlled structure than a group discussion. The following components form the structure of a meeting:

- A chairperson
- An agenda
- A process for making decisions
- A well-managed discussion
- A productive physical set-up.

An agenda contains a list or an outline of the points to be discussed in the meeting. Based on the agenda a group discussion can serve as a decision making tool in a meeting. Keeping the agenda in their minds the participants of the meeting come prepared to attend it.

The agenda is normally geared by one person - the chairperson or the convener. In a meeting, unlike a group discussion, it is the chairperson who first takes up an issue and expresses his or her views about it. He or she also holds the responsibility to direct the procedures of the meeting and may allow a group discussion on the basis of the agenda.

A meeting also looks back at what had happened in the previous meeting by presenting the minutes. This is because the participants are required to reflect on the earlier issues in order to analyse and evolve a step to move forward in the present or future.

Voting is a prevalent way of expressing one's views in a meeting even as an open discussion is not always possible. A group discussion may form a part of the whole course of action in a meeting based on the agenda.

3.3.1 Agenda of a Meeting

The agenda is the most important component of any meeting. It gives the necessary details about the meeting: the time and place of the meeting, the names of the people who will attend it, the time when the meeting starts and ends, the issues to be discussed in the meeting, any preparation the attendees have to make for the meeting such as contacting people and collecting relevant information.

Meetings cannot be effective in fulfilling their objective(s) if the agenda is too large. A hidden agenda also makes meetings a waste of time. It results from personality clashes, private conflicts and discussing issues unrelated to the proposed agenda. It lies only in the chairperson's hands to handle such situations.

The agenda must consider the usefulness of a meeting. It should be formulated with an aim to:

- Giving depth to decisions
- Preventing mistakes
- Evolving diverse thinking
- Encouraging the attendees in decision-making

The agenda is usually presented by the secretary (to the chairperson of the group/committee) and approved by the chairperson.

3.3.2 Preparing for a Meeting

Remember the following things have to be done before you attend a meeting:

- 1) Carefully read the notice and understand the purpose of the meeting.
- 2) Decide what preparation is required: e.g. make necessary arrangements at your office while you will be in the meeting or notify the convener in advance if you cannot attend the meeting.
- 3) Prepare any materials or information that may be needed.
- 4) Prepare answers to any questions that may be asked.
- 5) Prepare a list of points that must be covered.
- 6) Prepare a list of questions that you want answered.

3.4 READING: ROLE OF PARTICIPANTS

Following are some important points which help to make a meeting meaningful and a useful resource to decision-making in a company.

Etiquette while Attending Meetings

Never be late for a meeting. If the meeting has already begun and you enter late the Chairman has to brief you on the earlier proceedings to help you participate in the meeting meaningfully. This not only disrupts the meeting but also is a

barrier in the continuity of the discussions. Arriving late is a sign of disrespect to the Chairperson and other members. Unless there is a very pressing reason or circumstances beyond your control, be punctual for meetings. Building up a reputation of punctuality at meetings will pay you in the long run.

Prepare Well for the Meeting

Before you have to attend a meeting, prepare yourself thoroughly. Go through the agenda carefully and acquaint yourself with the issues to be discussed. Collect information which you think may be useful for the meeting. Have an opinion or view on all the issues but do not be rigid. Be open to others' ideas and opinions. Don't get emotionally attached to your own ideas. If people oppose your views, try to understand why. Don't become rigid unless it is a matter of principle. You may be convinced that you are right and others are wrong but it generally doesn't happen that way.

Be a Good Listener

It is very important to be a good listener so as to respond to the views of the other participants and to articulate your own opinions. Do not have any preconceptions based on the speaker's age, race, cultural background, appearance or sex. Maintain eye contact with the speaker. Pay attention to his/ her ideas – the evidence and logic. Think of questions which you would like to ask later. Ask for clarifications if you don't understand something.

Don't Interrupt

Always allow a speaker to finish what s/he has to say. You may disagree with his/her views. Make notes and vocalize them once the speaker has finished. Even if the speaker is saying something irrelevant, it is prerogative of the Chairperson to intervene or interrupt. Frequent interruptions in meetings not only lead to waste of time but also put the meeting off track. Respect the rights and opinions of the other members.

Follow the Agenda

Always follow the agenda while speaking. Never try to bring up issues which are not listed on the agenda. Try to stay within the general limits of the goals of the meeting.

Be an Active Participant

Participate meaningfully in the meeting. You should speak when given a chance and if you have something to contribute to the issue being discussed. Speak courteously and cooperatively with others. Do not talk for the sake of talking. Analyze if what you are saying really contributes and facilitates the discussion. Cooperate both with the participants and the Chairperson to achieve the goals of the meeting. Contribute to both the subject of the meeting and smooth interactions among the participants. Always keep a pen and paper to note down any point which seems relevant or requires discussion in detail. This also gives



the impression to others that you are serious and respect the views of others. Ask pertinent questions whenever required.

Don't Monopolize the Meeting

Don't monopolize the meeting. Speak as briefly and as coherently as possible. Other members will appreciate you for this and listen to you seriously. Choose an appropriate time to voice your opinion. Use language which is courteous and control your tone. Emotional outbursts will hinder the progress of the meeting and also cause unpleasantness.

Resolve Conflicts

If any conflict arises in decision making, be a facilitator and a mediator to resolve the issue. Being accommodative and understanding are not signs of weakness but a sign of strength and maturity.

Pay attention to Non-verbal Communication

People may be nodding their heads while listening but their facial expressions otherwise don't indicate agreement or acceptance of a particular opinion. Try to resolve them. Some others may be distracted or may try to disrupt the meeting in a very subtle way. Such people should not be encouraged to do so. Try to engage everybody to participate in the meeting.

Maintain Meeting Decorum

Do not use your mobile phone while attending a meeting. Either put your phone on silent mode or if possible switch it off. Maintain order and discipline in the meeting heeding to the requests and instructions of the Chairpersons.

Finally, regardless of the type of meeting (information or decision making), it is important to close with a restatement of objectives, a summary of what was accomplished and a list of the actions to be taken. It is also important to follow up with action after the meeting. A brief memorandum of conclusions should be written and distributed. People who could not attend the meeting should also be informed about the essential decisions made. Finally each meeting should be viewed as a learning experience. Future meetings should be improved by asking for people's opinion and evaluations and deciding what action is required to conduct better meetings.

Check Your Progress 5

Answer the following questions briefly:

- 1) List two things which you have to do before attending a meeting.

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- 2) Why is it important to be a good listener at a meeting?

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- 3) How can you be an active participant in the meeting?

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- 4) What are some of the meeting etiquettes which you should follow while attending a meeting.

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- 5) How can you be a successful facilitator and mediator in a meeting?

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- 6) What is the appropriate language and tone while attending a meeting and why?

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- 7) List three recommendations on how a meeting should end.

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- 8) What according to you should happen after a meeting?

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3.5 VOCABULARY

Given below are some statements / phrases which are generally used during a discussion in a meeting.

Phrases for Disagreement

I am sorry, I don't agree with you.

Sorry, I'm not sure I agree with you.

I understand what you are saying but...

Don't you think it is just the opposite of ...

Actually, I think it is not what the issue is, but...

I'm sorry I can't agree with you

I'm not sure if I agree with you

I can see what you're saying, but...

Really? Do you think so?
Don't you think that...?
Actually...to be honest....

Phrases for Clarification

What exactly do you mean by...?
Could you be more specific about...?
Would you please clarify the...
Are you saying that...?

Handling Interruptions

Sorry, would you please allow me to...
May I finish first before...?
That's not the point I...
I'm sorry, you have misunderstood the...
Please allow me to complete the...

Referring to Other Speakers

As Mr. Singh has already discussed...
I'm sure Mrs. Kapoor would agree...
Later on Mr. Handu can give a report on...
I agree to Mrs. Heena's views on...

Diplomatic Phrases

There's a problem...
I think there may be a problem with that
There seems to be a small problem
Actually, that's not going to be easy...
I want to make a change in the agenda.
We can't do that.
Your estimate for the cost is too low.
The project is running late.
The transport costs are very high.
There's a misunderstanding.
There will be a delay.

Phrases for Making and Responding to Suggestions

Perhaps you could...?

Why don't you...?

What about?

That's a good idea.

That could be worth trying.

What a great idea!

I'm not so sure about that.

I can see one or two problems there.

The different stages of a meeting can be summarized by the acronym – DESC

'D' – Describe situation

'E' – Express feelings/ opinions

'S' – Suggest solutions

'C' – Conclude with a decision

Check Your Progress 6

1) Which of these expressions would you use in the following situations?

- i) Preventing someone from interrupting

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- ii) Stating your opinion

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- iii) Asking to interrupt

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- iv) Closing the meeting

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- v) Asking for a clarification

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- vi) Inviting someone's opinion
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- vii) Asking for comments
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- viii) Moving on to the next point on the agenda
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2) **Role Play:** Work with a friend or by yourself to complete these short dialogues. Take it in turns to read the first statement and to reply according to the instructions.

- | | | |
|------|---|--|
| i) | I think the report is too long. | (disagree strongly) |
| ii) | It's too late to make any changes. | (agree) |
| iii) | I feel we all need to work together. | (agree strongly) |
| iv) | In my opinion, we need to cut down expenses on entertainment. | (disagree) |
| v) | We must wait till next year to start this project. | (disagree, state the opposite opinion) |

3.6 LET US SUM UP

A group discussion is a very useful technique for fulfilling many purposes. It can form a part of a meeting, or form a part of the interview process. Based on the agenda, a group discussion can serve as a decision-making tool in a meeting. A group discussion can also be part of competitive examinations and job interviews.

Meetings are also an essential part of the workplace. To make a meeting meaningful an agenda is important. It is also important to prepare for a meeting before you attend it. There is a certain etiquette and language which is required for both group discussions and meetings. It is important to be aware of both if you want to be effective and successful in your diverse contexts.

3.7 ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) True and False:
- i) F (You must question but using language politely and skillfully)
 - ii) T
 - iii) F (You must say what you feel is true but use your language skillfully to sound polite and inoffensive.)

- iv) F (You must be flexible and change your views if evidence to the contrary is given.)
- v) T
- 2) Suitability of topics for group discussion (you can have your own opinions):
- i) **Higher Education:** A topic framed and worded like this is broad and vague and hence not suitable for group discussion.
 - ii) **Should we develop rural or urban areas in India?** This topic is worded as ‘either/or’ one and hence not suitable for group discussion.
 - iii) **Tourism:** This topic is framed simply in one word and hence the topic is vague and not suitable for GD.
 - iv) **How Can India Become self-sufficient in Energy Resources?** This is a suitable topic as it poses a predicament to the members and requires a joint enquiry for making a decision.
 - v) **Research in Health issues should be left to the private sector:** Such a topic is good for debate and not for discussion as people can speak either ‘for’ or ‘against’ the topic and may come up with pre-determined propositions and views.

Check Your Progress 2

These are sample answers, yours could be different:

- 1) **Generating ideas :** Deterioration in the standard of teaching, teachers need to be well paid to overcome financial constraints, continued supervision of teaching for the sake of the students, commercialization of education, closing the coaching centres will elevate the standard of education, age of competition—rat race, techniques to score more marks. Coaching institutes have better facilities than regular schools and colleges, high amounts of fee at coaching centres is a financial burden on parents, end result, difference between regular (academic) and competitive examinations, many students clear the competitive exam without attending any coaching, hard work and thorough preparation is the key, yet no guarantee of success.
- 2) Arranging points in order to arrive at one of the two conclusions
 - i) Coaching is necessary because:
 - The standard of teaching is deteriorating day by day.
 - Education has been commercialized and teachers tend to earn more through coaching institutions, they fail in their duties at schools and colleges.
 - It is an age of competition – to win in the rat race you need to know more than what is taught in regular institutions.
 - Coaching centres teach useful techniques to score more marks. e.g. time management.
 - Coaching institutes have better facilities than regular schools and colleges.

- End result is that those who attend coaching are more successful than those who don't.
 - Coaching centres make one understand the difference between regular (academic) and competitive examinations.
- ii) Coaching is not needed, because:
- If the coaching centres are closed it will elevate the standard of education.
 - If the teachers are well paid they would not need an extra income.
 - Example/Fact: Many students clear the competitive examinations without attending any coaching.
 - Hard work and thorough preparation is the key and this can be encouraged in a normal classroom.
 - Fee is very high in coaching centres.
 - There is no guarantee of success. The good students anyway get through the exams but the coaching centres advertise their success as their own credit. Others fall in the way, lose money and repent after their failure.
- 3) **Beginning to speak:** Good morning friends. In my opinion coaching is necessary these days in order to prepare for academic studies and competitive exams. But I strongly believe that coaching for such purposes is not a recommendable practice. If certain things are changed to improve our educational standard, our students can become more capable and thorough in their subjects.
- Check Your Progress 3**
- i) **Suman** took the lead by being the first speaker. She decided quickly and put her ideas into action. She spoke with a touch of reality and out of common experience.
 - ii) **Nirmal** was the second speaker. He was confident, logical and has convincing skills. He has a high vision and is optimistic. He spoke for a longer time than Suman without any intercession. He too has leadership qualities and is a good speaker.
 - iii) **Jeet** gave practical and acceptable points. His true examples focused the discussion on facts. However his discussion was average.
 - iv) **Rekha** spoke late, but she spoke well. She spoke justifiably and systematically. She has a mature style of speaking and was successful in discussing her ideas. She can be encouraged to take up leading roles.
 - v) **Bala** supported the idea that childcare is the responsibility of parents. But he was focusing on the responsibility of the children towards parents and exhibited a selfish attitude. He appeared to be unsympathetic.

- vi) **Suman** spoke twice (as the first and the sixth speaker) in the group which is impressive. Her discussion was logical and convincing. It can be concluded that she has leadership qualities.

Check Your Progress 4

- 1) The topic for group discussion may have been: "Is child care the sole responsibility of parents?"
- 2) Among the 7 speakers, Koyel and Bhargav did not speak. They may have difficulty in generating ideas or in putting them forward, difficulty to start due lack of confidence or some other problem. Suman and Nirmal have good group communication skills. Rekha has also done reasonably well and can be recommended.

Check Your Progress 5

- 1) Before attending a meeting thorough preparation is required. Two steps to be taken are:
 - i) Go through the agenda carefully and acquaint yourself with the issues to be discussed.
 - ii) Collect information which you think may be useful for the meeting. Have an opinion or view on all the issues but do not be rigid. Be open to others' ideas and opinions.
- 2) It is very important to be a good listener so as to respond to the views of the other participants and to articulate your own opinions. Listening carefully will enable you to ask questions and clarifications about what you don't understand.
- 3) You can be an active participant by taking the following steps.
 - i) You should speak when given a chance and if you have something to contribute to the issue being discussed.
 - ii) Contribute to both the subject of the meeting and smooth interactions among the participants.
 - iii) Always keep a pen and paper to note down any point which seems relevant or requires discussion in detail. This also gives the impression to others that you are serious and respect the views of others.
 - iv) Ask pertinent questions whenever required.
- 4) Some of the meeting etiquette are listed below:
 - i) Never be late for a meeting. If the meeting has already begun then this will not only disrupt the meeting but also be a barrier in the continuity of the discussions. Arriving late is a sign of disrespect to the Chairperson and other members. Unless there is a very pressing reason or circumstances beyond your control, be punctual for meetings. Building up a reputation of punctuality at meetings will pay you in the long run.

- ii) Speak courteously and cooperatively with others. Do not talk for the sake of talking. Don't monopolize the meeting. Speak as briefly and as coherently as possible. Analyze if what you are saying really contributes and facilitates the discussion. Other members will appreciate you for this and listen to you seriously. Choose an appropriate time to voice your opinion.
 - iii) Use language which is courteous and control your tone. Emotional outbursts will hinder the progress of the meeting and also cause unpleasantness.
 - iv) Do not use your mobile phone while attending a meeting. Either put your phone on silent mode or if possible switch it off.
 - v) Maintain order and discipline in the meeting heeding to the requests and instructions of the Chairpersons. Cooperate both with the participants and the Chairperson to achieve the goals of the meeting.
- 5) i) If any conflict arises in decision making, be a facilitator and a mediator to resolve the issue. Being accommodative and understanding are not signs of weakness but a sign of strength and maturity.
- ii) Try to engage everybody to participate in the meeting.
- iii) Maintain order and discipline in the meeting heeding to the requests and instructions of the Chairpersons.
- 6) A courteous language and a controlled tone are most appropriate while attending a meeting. Emotional outbursts will hinder the progress of the meeting and also cause unpleasantness.
- 7) Regardless of the type of meeting (information or decision making), it is important to close it with the following:
- i) A restatement of objectives
 - ii) A summary of what was accomplished and
 - iii) A list of the actions to be taken
- 8) Once the meeting is over some of these steps should be taken.
- i) It is important to follow up with action after the meeting. A brief memorandum of conclusions should be written and distributed.
 - ii) People who could not attend the meeting should also be informed about the essential decisions made.
 - iii) Finally each meeting should be viewed as a learning experience. Future meetings should be improved by asking for people's opinion and evaluations and deciding what action is required to conduct better meetings.

Check Your Progress 6

- 1) i) **Preventing someone from interrupting** – Sorry, please let him finish.
- ii) **Stating your opinion** – In my view....., I believe.....

- iii) **Asking to interrupt** – If I may interrupt..., Sorry to interrupt, but.....
 - iv) **Closing the meeting** – I think we've covered everything. That's it then. The next meeting will be held on Friday the 20th of June.
 - v) **Asking for a clarification** – Excuse me, may I ask for a clarification on this?
 - vi) **Inviting someone's opinion** – Could we hear from Puneet?... What do you think about?
 - vii) **Asking for comments** – Any comments?
 - viii) **Moving on to the next point on the agenda** – Let's move on to the next point..... Now we come to the question of.....
- 2) The sample reply is given in **bold**:
- i) I think the report is too long. (*disagree strongly*).
I wouldn't say that at all.
 - ii) It's too late to make any changes. (*agree*)
I think you're right.
 - iii) I feel we all need to work together. (*agree strongly*)
I couldn't agree more.
 - iv) In my opinion, we need to cut down expenses on entertainment.
(*disagree*)
That's not how I see it.
 - v) We must wait till next year to start this project. (*disagree, state the opposite opinion*)
That's out of the question. On the contrary, we should begin working on it as soon as we can.

UNIT 4 PRESENTATION SKILLS: ESSENTIALS OF PRESENTATION SKILLS

Structure

- 4.0 Objectives
 - 4.1 Introduction: Understanding a Presentation
 - 4.2 Reading: Making a Good Impression
 - 4.3 Using Visual Aids
 - 4.4 Language Associated with Talking About Visuals
 - 4.5 The Ending of a Presentation
 - 4.6 Signposting the End of Your Talk
 - 4.7 Let Us Sum Up
 - 4.8 Answers
-

4.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit you will learn about Presentation Skills. You will learn:

- The essentials of presentations
 - How to prepare for presentations
 - How to make outlines of presentations
 - Use of signaling, signposting and listing techniques in presentations
 - Language associated with visual aids; and
 - How to end a presentation.
-

4.1 INTRODUCTION: UNDERSTANDING A PRESENTATION

Presentations are a way of communicating ideas and information to a group. The objective of communication is to make your message understood and remembered. In order to achieve this, the presenter must be clear, coherent, articulate and convincing. A presentation puts you on display before your audience. Therefore in order to be effective and impressive in your presentation, you need to prepare before you actually deliver. Even experts in communication need to plan and prepare their presentations in advance.

Most presentations either inform the audience about something or try to persuade the audience about a product, service, an idea or a concept. Hence we often hear of sales presentations for existing or prospective clients, as well as presentations on projects, reports, proposals and updates on various business activities for business associates, seniors, colleagues and subordinates.

However, these days presentations have also become an important part of the recruitment process in business organizations. Perhaps this is because the job market has become so competitive that job interviews are not enough for companies to gauge the skills of their applicants. Therefore, in many organizations, the short listed applicants are asked to make presentations before the selection panel. Through presentations the interviewers get an opportunity to look at the ability of the applicants to identify and organize appropriate material on a specific topic as well as to support and illustrate ideas. On the other hand, the candidates have a chance to show their public speaking skills, their ability to communicate to an audience, to persuade and convince and to display their confidence and leadership abilities.

No wonder presentations are considered as one of the first managerial skills.

4.2 READING: MAKING A GOOD IMPRESSION

Read the following text on presentations and answer the questions given below:

The first few minutes of the presentation are very precious and crucial. If you fail to arrest the attention of your audience in the beginning, you may lose it forever. You make your first impression even before you've opened your mouth to speak. It's got to do with the way you look and carry yourself.



Your dress needs to be neat, smart and appropriate to the occasion. It is mostly formal for presentations. The next thing to pay attention to would be your gait and posture. Your body communicates different impressions to the audience. People not only listen to you, they also watch you. Slouching tells them you are indifferent or you do not care...even though you might care a great deal! On the other hand, displaying good posture tells your audience that you know what you are doing and you care deeply about it. Also, a good posture helps you to speak more clearly and effectively. While you need to be upright and look confident, you may need to guard against looking too stiff and uncomfortable. The key is to look relaxed and comfortable and at ease with your surroundings. Reaching the venue of your presentation well in time could be immensely helpful in getting you to be comfortable with the place.

Eye contact is another crucial factor. It signals interest in others and helps you to connect with the audience. The audience responds to you better when you look them in the eyes. Do not keep your eyes away from the audience for too long, even when you are attending to equipment or looking at your slides.

The expressions you wear on your face transmit a great deal. A smile is contagious. When you smile at somebody, chances are that he / she will smile

back at you. A smile spreads happiness around you as it makes others smile in response. It also transmits happiness, friendliness and warmth.

The voice is probably the most valuable tool you possess. It is the vehicle that carries most of the content that you wish to pass on to the audience. Hence the presenter needs to use her/his voice to maximum advantage. You must work on the speed at which you speak as well as the volume. The pitch and tone are other areas that need your attention. It is a good idea to practice before a colleague or friend and get feedback on whether you are too fast, too high, too soft, etc. Do not speak in a monotone as it bores the listener. Modulate your voice. Good speakers lower their voice to draw the audience in, and raise it to make a point. Warmth of tone and the right emotions to accompany your words can help you to connect with the audience instantly.

Lastly, don't forget that the audience will forgive a lot if the speaker is enthusiastic. If you are interested and enthused, you will pass this on to your listeners. But don't confuse enthusiasm with loudness.

So now you know that presentations are not just about well researched and painstakingly gathered material, well organized and structured. They are a lot about how you combine the human element with the content to reach out and connect.

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Pick the sentence that best describes the theme of the passage
 - i) Qualities of a good presentation
 - ii) Qualities of a good presenter
 - iii) The role of the audience
- 2) State whether the following statements are **True** or **False**. Mark **doesn't say** for statements that the passage doesn't deal with.
 - i) The speaker must reach the venue on time.
 - ii) You should be formally dressed for a presentation.
 - iii) People spend more time watching you than listening to you.
 - iv) You can feel relaxed by talking occasionally to the audience.
 - v) Use your smile sparingly during a presentation.
 - vi) Your voice is the means of transport for your words.
 - vii) Your friends can help you out by letting you know whether you are making the desired impact.
 - viii) The content of the presentation is more important than the human element.
- 3) Match these meanings with words from the text.
 - i) dear
 - ii) capture

- iii) people's opinion of you
- iv) bending
- v) location
- vi) someone who works with you
- vii) optimum
- viii) with a great deal of effort

4.2.1 Structure of a Presentation

Before giving a presentation on a subject we plan in advance **what** we intend to say.

Take a close look at the following flowchart. It will help you organize your thoughts.

I) BEGINNING

- 1) Introduce yourself
- 2) State your purpose
- 3) Relate subject to the audience
- 4) Give a brief outline



II) MIDDLE

- 1) Do not present more than four main points/ideas
- 2) Support main ideas by facts
- 3) Use signposting
- 4) Use visuals



III) ENDING

- 1) Reiterate/reinforce what you have said/summarize main points
- 2) Do not present new ideas
- 3) Make a conclusion or recommendation, if necessary
- 4) Relate conclusion to the audience
- 5) Invite questions

To make your presentation enjoyable, try to capture the interest of your audience right from the beginning by asking rhetorical questions, telling an interesting story, quotation or a joke. Never read from your notes! Use PowerPoint slides or cards with keywords instead.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Decide which of the phrases below, you would use at the different stages of your presentation? Mark your replies with the numbers from the flowchart (for example, I/2, III/1, etc)

**Listening and Speaking in
Informal and Formal
Contexts**

III/3	In conclusion.....	Secondly...
III/1	To sum up.....	And finally....
	Let's turn to.....	I will begin with...
	That brings me to.....	After that we'll look at...
	Let's leave that and.....	What was the reason for this?
	Let's start with.....	Did you know that...?
	So that covers	Let's move on to....
	If you have any questions, feel free to ask...	Let's just re-cap...
	I've divided my talk into three main parts...	To summarize the main points...
	I'd like to talk about...	I'd like to conclude by ...
	I'm delighted to be here today...	Thanks for giving me the chance to
	I'd like to welcome you all here today	Thank you all for listening....
	The purpose of my talk is...	Would you mind repeating your ...
	Firstly....	I'm afraid I can't answer this...

2) Prepare a 5 minutes presentation on how to prepare for a job interview, keeping in mind the structure suggested above. You may use the following points or include points of your own:

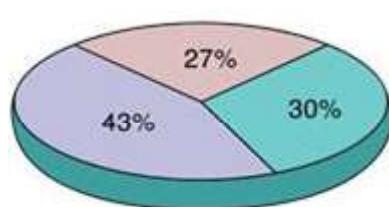
- The importance of proper and adequate preparation for a job interview
- Knowledge of the company
- An understanding of the job requirements and responsibilities spelt out in the advertisement
- Preparing for possible questions you may be asked
- Deciding about what you would like to ask
- Your dress code on the day of the interview

Now make the presentation before a study partner and ask him/her to give you feedback on these specific areas:

- Content of your presentation
- Structure and coherence
- Language and vocabulary
- Body language
- Overall impact

4.3 USING VISUAL AIDS

Most presentations deal with statistics and other complex data which would be confusing if it were described in words without any visual support. It is here that visual aids come to our rescue. They help us to present figures, to make comparisons and contrasts, to project future performances and to talk about past, present and future trends, thus serving the dual purpose of enabling the presenter to deal with this kind of information easily and making it possible for listeners to understand these clearly. A variety of visual aids like flip charts, line graphs, bar graphs, pie charts, pictograms, maps, tables, diagrams, photographs, etc can be used for this purpose.



Visual aids also make a presentation more interesting. Moreover, they help you to cut down on the amount of talking you have to do.

However, you must ensure that your visuals are relevant, appropriate and clear. Never overload the listeners with information. Effective presenters introduce and highlight visual information briefly and clearly, making sure they allow their audience time to absorb the information. We must use visuals to reinforce and clarify, and not to overwhelm the audience.

Check Your Progress 3

After you have read the above text answer these questions:

- 1) Give two examples of business areas where it is advisable for the presenter to use visual aids to present information.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

- 2) Name two functions that visuals help us to perform easily and effectively.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

- 3) Name five types of visual aids.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

- 4) Name two do's and two don'ts for the use of visual aids.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

- 5) Name two major benefits of using visual aids.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Vocabulary

Activity 1

Here is a list of what you can use visual aids for. Choose the appropriate words from the box to complete this list.

build up	convey	give	summarize	clarify	add
present	illustrate	help	restate		

You can use visual aids to:

- i) an idea or concept; , theory or hypothesis;
- ii) your text with graphs, pie charts, graphics or simply line drawings;
- iii) a point;
- iv) a point for emphasis;

- v) the structure or content of a section or topic;
- vi) key concepts or main areas;
- vii) instructions for an activity;
- viii) material to start a discussion;
- ix) interest and variety to your presentation;
- x) visuals to develop an idea;
- xi) the audience recall a concept or idea, either from their own past or from your talk.

4.4 LANGUAGE ASSOCIATED WITH TALKING ABOUT VISUALS

Introducing a visual:

- First of all let's look at.....
- I'd like to show you.....
- Have a look at this.....
- This graph shows / represents.....
- Here we can see.....
- Let's look at this.....
- As you can see in this graph/table.....



Talking about visuals : On analyzing this graph.....

- What is interesting in this graph.....
- It is evident from this diagram.....
- This visual clearly indicates.....
- On taking a closer look.....

Comparisons :

- This compares *x* with *y*.....
- Let's compare the.....
- Here you see a comparison between.....
- A close look at these two pie charts shows.....
- In sharp contrast to *x*.....

Activity 2

In column A there is a list of adjectives, change them into adverbs in column B.

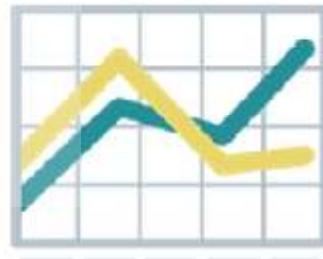
A	B
i) Quick	
ii) Noticeable	
iii) Gradual	

iv) Steady v) Significant vi) Slow vii) Dramatic viii) Rapid ix) Substantial x) Nominal	
---	--

Activity 3

Fill in the blanks in the sentences below using the words from your completed box.

- i) There was arise in the sale of Television sets during the World Cup Championships.
 Sale of television sets rose during the World Cup Championships.
- ii) There has been a rise in the summer temperatures in the last five years.
 Summer temperatures rosein the last five years.
- iii) The cost of living has been going upever since the economic recession.
 There has been a increase in the cost of living since the economic recession.
- iv) There has been a..... demand for courses in management in the last five years.
 Demand for management courses has gone upin the last five years.
- v) The sale of electric cars is expected to increaseonce they are readily available.
 Aincrease is expected in the sale of electric cars once they are readily available.
- vi) International travel has gone up but steadily in the last year.
 International travel has seen a and steady rise in the last year.
- vii) There has been arise in the cost of petrol in the last ten years.
 Cost of petrol has risen in the last ten years.
- viii) Scooters have seen afall in demand in the recent past.
 The demand for scooters has fallen in the recent past.
- ix) On the other hand the demand for motorcycles has shot up



On the other hand there has been a increase in the demand for motorcycles.

- x) There is likely to be aincrease in the cost of rail tickets next year.

The cost of rail tickets is likely to go up in the next year.

4.5 THE ENDING OF A PRESENTATION

Read the following text on the ending of presentations and answer the questions that follow:

The most important parts of your presentation are the beginning and the conclusion. By starting out well, you capture the attention of the audience and by concluding well, you leave them with something to think over or do.

An effective way to end is to review your points and connect them to your introduction. This also helps with the overall coherence of your talk. You need to restate the most important point of your presentation and connect your conclusion with the main idea. This helps the audience retain what you want them to remember.

If the presentation was about a problem, you could restate the problem, then provide the solution in no more than two sentences.

A timeline for implementing the solution is even better. The audience must leave with something valuable or beneficial for them.

Ending with a quotation or punch line usually leaves a great impact on the audience and helps them to connect with the main theme through this exit line.

The ending should help you interact with your audience at an emotional level. This is possible when you don't read from your notes and move from the lectern towards the audience. It is important to have sustained eye contact at this point just as it is in the beginning of your presentation. Hence, the conclusion must be thought out carefully and presented effectively.

Check Your Progress 4

On the basis of the given text complete these sentences in your own words:

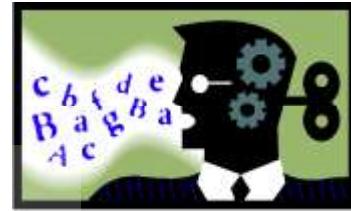
- 1) The ending of your presentation is as important as.....
- 2) You can end effectively by
- 3) You can make the ending coherent by
- 4) In a problem related presentation it is recommended that you



- 5) A quotation or a punch line helps.....
.....
- 6) Moving towards the audience at the end of your presentation enables you to.....

4.6 SIGNPOSTING THE END OF YOUR TALK

Here is some useful language for the end of your presentation.



This may take the form of a recapitulation of the main points.

- I'd like to summarize/sum up
- At this stage I would like to run through/ over the main points...
- So, as we have seen today....
- As I have tried to explain this morning
- To restate my main points
- It will be useful at this stage to recall the main points.....

There may be recommendations or proposals that you wish to make:

- On the basis of my arguments I propose that.....
- As a result we suggest that.....
- In the light of what we have seen today I suggest that.....
- My first proposal is.....

Alternatively you could say:

- I'd like to conclude with.....
- In conclusion I would like to say that.....
- My final comments concern.....
- I would like to finish by reminding everyone that.....

You may at this point wish to distribute more detailed information to your audience.

- I've prepared a slim folder of the proposals...;
- In the sheets that are now being distributed you will find a breakdown of the.....
- You will find additional information on in these handouts that I'd now like to distribute.

Inviting the audience to a Question / Answer session or a Discussion

- I'd be happy to answer any questions....
- If there are any questions please feel free to ask.
- Thank you very much for your attention and if there are any suggestions or comments.....
- I would now like to invite you to a discussion.....

4.7 LET US SUM UP

In this Unit you have learnt about the **importance of presentations**. They are commonly used in workplaces for the purpose of communication in a variety of situations that range from reporting on your department or the progress of your work to selling products and services. Besides, they have recently become part of the recruitment process.

The **objective** of most presentations is either to inform or persuade the listeners about something.

The **essentials** of presentations include clarity, coherence and a structured outline.

Preparation for presentations is as important as the actual delivery. Well prepared presentations help you to be more confident and to overcome fear and anxiety.

Practice of presentations ensures that you get familiar with the content, and you time yourself. Practice also enhances the confidence of the speaker.



Use of **PowerPoint** can help you to feel more comfortable with your presentation and to make it more engaging. The **graphics** can help you to present complex data in a simple and comprehensive manner.

4.8 ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) ii)
- 2) i) T
ii) T
iii) Doesn't say
iv) Doesn't say
v) F
vi) T
vii) T
viii) Doesn't say
- 3) i) precious
ii) arrest
iii) impression
iv) slouching
v) venue
vi) colleague
vii) maximum
viii) painstakingly

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Phrases to be used at different stages of presentation:

III/3	In conclusion...	I/4	Secondly...
III/1	To sum up...	I/4	And finally...
II/3	Let's turn to...	I/4	I will begin with...
II/3	That brings me to...	I/4	After that we'll look at...
II/3	Let's leave that and...	II/2	What was the reason for this?
II/3	Let's start with....	II/2	Did you know that...?
II/3	So that covers ...	II/3	Let's move on to....
III/5	If you have any questions, feel free to ask...	II/3	Let's take a closer look at....
I/4	I've divided my talk into three parts...	III/1	To summarize the main points...
I/2	I'd like to talk about...	III/3	I'd like to conclude by....
I/1	I'm delighted to be here today...	III/4	Thanks for giving me the chance to...
I/1	I'd like to welcome you all here today	II/4	As you can see from...
I/2	The purpose of my talk is...	III/5	Would you mind repeating your ...
I/4	Firstly...	III/5	I'm afraid I can't answer this...

- 2) Do it yourself

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Two examples of business areas where it is advisable for the presenter to use visual aids to present information: **statistics and complex data**.
- 2) Two functions that visuals help us to perform easily and effectively - present figures, to make comparisons and contrasts, to project future performances and to talk about past, present and future trends.
- 3) Five types of visual aids: - flip charts, line graphs, bar graphs, pie charts, pictograms, maps, tables, diagrams, photographs.
- 4) Do's – visual aids must be relevant, appropriate and clear.

Don'ts – don't overload, don't rush through them – allow audience time to read and understand them.

- 5) Two major benefits of using visual aids:
 - i) Make presentations more interesting.
 - ii) Cut down on your talking time

Activity 1

You can use visual aids to:

- i) **convey** an idea, concept, theory or hypothesis;
- ii) **illustrate** your text with graphs, pie charts, graphics or simply line drawings;
- iii) **clarify** a point;
- iv) **restate** a point for emphasis;
- v) **summarize** the structure or content of a section or topic;
- vi) **build up** key concepts or main areas;
- vii) **give** instructions for an activity;
- viii) **present** material to start a discussion;
- ix) **add** interest and variety to your presentation;
- x) **add** visuals to develop an idea;
- xi) **Help** the audience recall a concept or idea, either from their own past or from your talk;

Activity 2

A	B
i) Quick	Quickly
ii) Noticeable	Noticeably
iii) Gradual	Gradually
iv) Steady	Steadily
v) Significant	Significantly
vi) Slow	Slowly
vii) Dramatic	Dramatically
viii) Rapid	Rapidly
ix) Substantial	Substantially
x) Nominal	Nominally

Activity 3

Missing words are given in **bold**.

- i) There was a **quick** rise in the sale of Television sets during the World Cup Championships.
Sale of television sets rose **quickly** during the World Cup Championships.
- ii) There has been a **noticeable** rise in the summer temperatures in the last five years.
Summer temperatures rose **noticeably** in the last five years.
- iii) The cost of living has been going up **gradually** ever since the economic recession.

- There has been a **gradual** increase in the cost of living since the economic recession.
- iv) There has been a **steady** demand for courses in management in the last five years.
Demand for management courses has gone up **steadily** in the last five years.
- v) The sale of electric cars is expected to increase **significantly** once they are readily available.
A **significant** increase is expected in the sale of electric cars once they are readily available.
- vi) International travel has gone up **slowly** but steadily in the last year.
International travel has seen a **slow** and steady rise in the last year.
- vii) There has been a **dramatic** rise in the cost of petrol in the last ten years.
Cost of petrol has risen **dramatically** in the last ten years.
- viii) Scooters have seen a **rapid** fall in demand in the recent past.
The demand for scooters has fallen **rapidly** in the recent past.
- ix) On the other hand the demand for motorcycles has shot up **substantially**.
On the other hand there has been a **substantial** increase in the demand for motorcycles.
- x) There is likely to be a **nominal** increase in the cost of rail tickets next year.
The cost of rail tickets is likely to go up **nominally** in the next year.

Check Your Progress 4

- 1) The ending of your presentation is as important **as the beginning / introduction**.
- 2) You can end effectively by **recalling your main points**.
- 3) You can make the ending coherent by **correlating it to the main idea of your talk**.
- 4) In a problem related presentation it is recommended that you **restate the problem and summarize the solution**.
- 5) A quotation or a punch line helps **to make an impact on the audience**.
- 6) Moving towards the audience at the end of your presentation enables you to **connect emotionally with your audience**.